

My name is David Tijerina of 115 W. Cavanaugh Road Lansing MI 48910. I am opposed to the creation of a new law that would establish English as the official state language.

This bill is part of a national movement that was originally dubbed as "English Only" in 1981 by Samuel Ichiye Hayakawa. The term "English Only," came under fire by many groups because we are a nation of immigrants, and we ALL contribute to (whichever term you prefer) the melting pot or salad bowl. Nowadays, there are many different groups involved in this debate, such as "ProEnglish," "Official English" and "U.S. English."

There are many issues that will be impacted if this bill becomes law:

- immigration

- education of the children of immigrants,

- the rights of minorities (especially Spanish-speaking U.S. citizens)

- Diversity and tolerance vs bigotry and racism

If the above problems are the real THREAT to Michigan, then the legislature should address THOSE issues. English is NOT an endangered language. If you ask any immigrant today, if they will see their native language pass onto their grandchildren, almost ALL of them will tell you "no."

We do NOT need a new law, when, according to the census, the great preponderance (91%) of American residents speak English anyway? We already know that. If this bill becomes law, Michigan will become more isolationist and more protectionist and more xenophobic. That is not the Michigan I know. The Michigan I know welcomes many things from many cultures, such as foods, cars, and sports.

Assimilation no longer requires everyone to become the same. Nowadays, different cultures contribute more to the whole, and when they converge, they impact and enrich each other.